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No. CCCXXXIX.

FRENCH'S MINOR DRAMA.

THE ACTING EDITION.

THE CABLE CAR

AN HOWELLIAN BURLESQUE

In Two Acts.

BY

CLARA HARRIET SHERWOOD.

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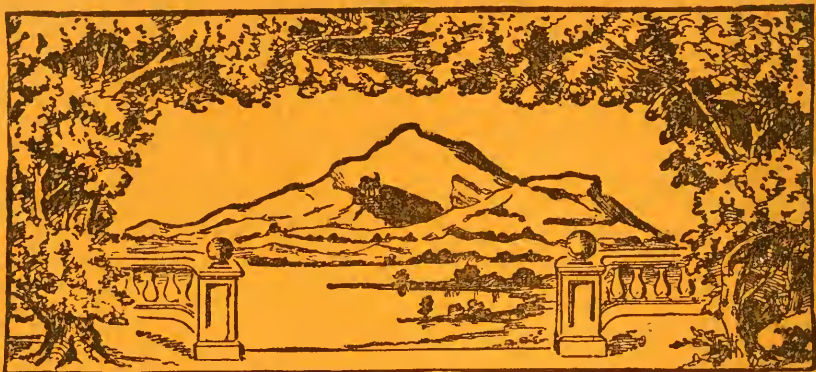
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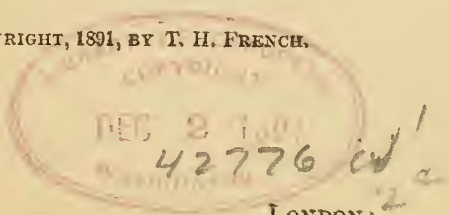
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1891

sure a young girl must have attention, and he has been very devoted—but let Kitty marry a Winthrop? Never!

MRS. F. He seems to be a very nice young fellow.

MISS H. (*Scornfully.*) O, nice enough perhaps—but like father, like son, I say. The Winthrops were always a faithless, deceitful, hard hearted set, and none of my family shall have anything to do with them. (*Drops her umbrella. The Jew picks it up and gives it to her.*)

[*Enter CONDUCTOR. Both women fumble at their purses.*]

MRS. F. (*Finding a dime.*) Now, Matilda, you shan't pay for me. I intend to pay for myself.

(CONDUCTOR gives her back five cents. MISS HARRIS gives him a quarter, which, after some difficulty, he is able to change. Gong sounds.)

MISS H. (*In a high voice.*) How noisy these cars are.

MRS. F. Yes, aren't they? But speaking of getting a seat—why the other evening I came up from down town rather late, and the car was filled with workmen. Common working men, most of them, and I had to stand nearly the entire way.

MISS H. Shocking!

MRS. F. Yes, and Kitty said she supposed they were tired. Tired! Imagine it! Those great strong men—when I had been shopping all afternoon.

MISS H. (*With a sigh.*) O! I suppose the day will come when women will get up to give men their seats.

MR. HOBSON, of Indiana. (*Who has been fidgeting about and looking out of the window—rising to his feet.*) What street's this yhere, conductor?

CONDUCTOR. 30th Street.

(MR. HOBSON takes out his large silver watch, ties his umbrella and carpetsack together, and once more gives undivided attention to the scene around him.)

[*Gong sounds.*]

MRS. F. How chilly it is this morning. These cars are so draughty.

MISS H. (*Spitefully.*) Yes—no doubt Mrs. Anderson is very comfortable in her sealskin this morning.

MRS. F. You don't mean to tell me that she wears a sealskin already.

MISS H. As it is a new one, most certainly. She wore it to the Children's Hospital yesterday, though it was quite warm. She said she only ran in for a moment to see how the little dears were getting on. But Mrs. Van Wortemburg came in, with her airs, and she stayed all afternoon and kept the sacque on, too—although I was uncomfortable in a light jacket.

MRS. F. Perhaps Mrs. Van Wortemburg's airs kept her cool.

MISS H. They were chilling enough, certainly, but her little dears were neglected, I fear.

MRS. F. "Little dears" indeed! They haven't much to thank her for. If some people would deny themselves a trifle they might be able to give something occasionally, or at least pay their dues.

MISS H. (*Excitedly.*) Dues! Do you mean to say she hasn't paid her dues yet—with her domineering ways?

MRS. F. Of course you'll never mention it, Matilda?

MISS H. Never—

(*The Jew leaves the car and the umbrella drops toward the corner.*)

MRS. F. Not a word to anyone?

MISS H. (*Moving closer and leaving the umbrella quite a distance from her.*) No—no—

MRS. F. (*Confidentially.*) Well, then—(*leans over and whispers to her.*)

MR. HOBSON. (*Excitedly.*) Conductor, what street's this yhere?
CONDUCTOR. 26th Street.

MR. H. (*Grabbing his belongings.*) Let me off here. (*Rises. Car stops suddenly, sending him violently toward the end of the car and mashing his tall white hat against the door. The two women continue to converse in interested whispers, not noticing the delay. GEORGE WINTHROP, observing MR. H.'s confusion, and seeing the umbrella beside his vacant seat, comes to the erroneous conclusion that it belongs to him. Catching it up hastily he starts toward the door.*)

MR. W. Here is your umbrella, sir.

MR. H. (*Too excited to notice that it is not his.*) Thank ye, young feller, thank ee. [*Exit MR. H.*]

MISS H. Why, Jane Forsythe! I never would have believed it. Never. And you really have it on the very best authority?

MRS. F. The very best.

MISS H. (*With resignation.*) Well—well. Appearances are so deceitful. Some people only go to the hospital for effect—or to accomplish their own ends. One can't be sure of one's own relatives. And that reminds me—(*looking out of the window.*) We get off at the next corner, Jane. I must go over to the hospital for a few minutes. Mrs. Van Wortemburg is sure to wear her new fall suit, and I want to see it. But what was I saying about relatives? O yes—Why, cousin Sam Hobson, from Indiana, will arrive some time to-day, and I must find out about the trains, for he could never find his way in the world. He hasn't been here for twenty years—and you know what Indiana farmers are. But I can't get over Mrs. Anderson. Stop here, conductor! (*Waving her hand—looking around.*) But where is my umbrella? Jane, have you my umbrella?

MRS. F. No indeed. You had it right there by you.

MRS. F. } Why it's gone!
MISS H. }

MISS H. Jane, I see it all. That abominable, detestable Jew has taken it. He sat next to me. He and he alone could have taken it. Kitty's umbrella! Conductor, what do you mean by allowing your passengers to be robbed in this way?

MR. W. (*Whose face is blank with amazement—aside.*) Kitty's umbrella! Whew! (*Aloud.*) Mum—Miss Harris,—I—I—beg your pardon—It is all a mistake—all my fault—I assure you—

MISS H. (*Coldly.*) What can you mean? Your fault? A mistake? What?

MR. W. I—I gave it to the man when—when he got off the car.

MISS H. To what man? The Jew?

MR. W. No—no. To the countryman in the corner.

MISS H. (*Jeily.*) And may I ask what right you had to give my umbrella—Kitty's umbrella to any man—Jew or gentile?

CONDUCTOR. Are you ladies going to get off the car? We can't wait all day.

MISS H. Conductor, I shall report you for disrespect. I demand the umbrella which was stolen from me, and I shall not leave this car without it.

CONDUCTOR. Can't help it, Madame. (*Pulls the bell. Gong sounds, and all lurch forward.*)

MRS. F. But we want to get off, Matilda.

MISS H. Yes, we must get out. Mr. Winthrop is so very generous, perhaps he will stop the car for us.

MR. W. (*Signalling conductor.*) Certainly. I am very sorry and will do my best to obtain your umbrella.

(*Exeunt all three pell-mell.*)

(MAJOR WINTHROP *returns to his seat—raises his eyebrows—gives a noiseless whistle, and resumes his newspaper.*)

[*Gong sounds. Enter MISS MAMIE ANDERSON and MISS BESSIE PREWITT. Both lurch toward the front of the car, recover their equilibrium, and finally fall breathlessly into their seats.*]

MISS A. Well, my dear, did you ever in your life see anything quite so jerky as these cable cars. I simply can't stand them.

MISS P. Can't stand in them, you mean. (*Both titter.*)

MISS A. How bright you are after last night. Why, after a ball I am as dull—as dull as a hoe.

MISS P. You were more like a rake last night. Gracious, how you did rake in the men. (*Both laugh.*)

MISS A. Why, Bess, you positively scintillate. This is even more sparkling than you were last night, despite the spangled tulle.

[*Gong sounds.*]

MISS P. (*Looking out of the window*) Oh! There goes Van Wortemburg Jones.

MISS A. (*Excitedly.*) Where—where?

MISS P. Down the street there. Now, what an ugly little thing he is for the girls to make such a fuss over. Just see how he walks; why, I wouldn't turn the corner to speak to him.

MISS A. Money rules the world, my dear.

MISS P. Money! Is he rich? I didn't know that.

MISS A. Several hundred thousand, I believe.

MISS P. (*Craning her neck.*) Why doesn't the man look this way. Ah! (*With a most winning bow and smile.*) How do you do, Mr. Jones.

MISS A. I don't think he is so very ugly.

MISS P. N—o—he's better looking when one is close to him.

MISS A. Close enough to see the dollar sign? (*Both laugh.*)

[*Enter CONDUCTOR.*]

(*Both girls fumble at their purses.*)

MISS P. (*At last, reluctantly.*) Let me pay.

MISS A. (*Indifferently.*) I'll pay.

MISS P. (*With alacrity.*) Well, I'll pay coming back, then. But to return to last night. Did you notice how madly devoted George Winthrop was to Kitty Harris?

(*MAJOR drops his paper in astonishment. Then recovers himself, though he listens intently.*)

MISS A. Did I notice it? Why, everyone in the room was talking of it. Do you suppose they are really engaged?

MISS P. (*Affectedly.*) Engaged?—Why, the idea! Nothing in the world but good friends! (*Both laugh.*)

MISS A. But did you see him just now getting off the car with her aunt?

MISS P. Yes—and they all looked as mad as hornets. In the vernacular of my small brother, I wonder what's up?

MISS A. You know, my dear, they say that both Miss Harris and Major Winthrop are violently opposed to the match.

MISS P. No—Really?

MISS A. Yes, indeed—and of course you know the reason for that.

MISS P. Reason!—What do you mean? Can it be that I am about to hear a bit of gossip—possibly scandal? Make haste, Mame, I not only lend you my ears, but offer them as a gift. What is it? (*Gong sounds.*)

MISS A. (*Raising her voice.*) Why, my dear, of course you know that Major Winthrop was at one time engaged to Miss Harris?

(*MAJOR starts violently, and drops his spectacles.*)

MISS P. What! You don't mean it? How romantic!

MISS A. Yes, my dear—and it seems that a man named Hobson or Dobson or something was in love with her, too—and during the war he saved his life.

MISS P. Who saved whose life?

MISS A. Why Dobson—or whatever his name is—saved Major Winthrop's life, but was severely wounded himself. And during his illness the Major took care of him, and he raved about 'Matilda—Matilda,' all the time. And there was a letter addressed to her in his pocket—

MISS P. In the Major's pocket?

Miss A. (*Impatiently.*) No—no. In Mr. What's-his-name's pocket. See?

Miss P. O, yes. A love letter.

Miss A. I don't know that—anyway it was a letter. So what does the Major do but break off the engagement.

Miss P. Without any explanation?

Miss A. Without any explanation.

Miss P. And what became of Mr.—a—Robson?

Miss A. O, he vanished from the scene, and Miss Matilda still enjoys single blessedness—and, as you may imagine, does not cherish the maddest affection for the Major.

[*Gong sounds.*]

Miss P. My dear, I never heard of such a thing. But now that he's a widower and she's free, why don't they revive their old loves and marry?

Miss A. I'm sure I don't know. Why don't you suggest it to the Major? He has probably never thought of it. (*Both laugh.*)

(*The MAJOR rises slowly from his seat, and turning neither to the right nor to the left, marches out of the car with as much dignity as possible under the circumstances. Both girls catch their breath, and look at one another in horror.*)

Miss P. (*Seizing her companion's wrist.*) Mame! The major! Do you suppose he heard us? (*They continue to look at one another for a minute and then burst into uncontrollable laughter.*)

Miss A. (*At last.*) O, he couldn't have heard us, Bess. These cars make such a noise, and besides we were talking very low. But here we are. (*Waving vigorously at the conductor.*) Will that stupid conductor never look? (*Gong sounds.*)

CURTAIN.

ACT II.

SCENE.—*Section of the same car at half after four that evening.* MR. SAMUEL HOBSON, of Indiana, discovered walking up and down the car reading placards and notices.

[*Enter CONDUCTOR.*]

MR. H. Ain't this car No. 17?

CONDUCTOR. That's the number of this car.

MR. H. Then this yhere's the car I rode on this mornin'. I've been a-hunting fur it all day. You remember me—don't you?

CONDUCTOR. Can't say that I do.

MR. H. Don't you remember the man the smart young elick give the umbrrell to? Well, I'm the man—and this (*holding it up*) this yhere's the umbrrell. Now, see yhere, conductor, this don't belong to me. I'm here from Indiany, to visit some o' my kin, and this yhere derved thing has kep' me hoopin the hull day—huntin' fur this car so as I could put the umbrrell back where I foun' it. Didn't know but you might be acquainted with them that owns it. Air ye?

CONDUCTOR. No, but if you'll leave it with me when you get out I'll take it to the office.

MR. H. All right. When does this car start?

CONDUCTOR. Now.

MR. H. Well, I'm going out to ride on the cow catcher.

[*Gong sounds.*]

[*Enter MAJOR WINTHROP and his son. They take seats at the forward end of the car.*]

MAJOR. (*With a slight cough.*) Well, my son, you made your parent proud of you this morning by your noble generosity in the car.

MR. W. (*Muttering.*) Made a howling ass of myself.

MAJOR. No—I think Miss-a—Miss Harris did the howling. But how did it all end? What did you do about it?

MR. W. O, I rambled around for three-quarters of an hour in search of the seedy individual who is now the happy possessor of Kit—of Miss Harris's umbrella.

MAJOR. (*Dryly.*) Found him, I suppose?

MR. W. (*Vindicatively.*) No—but she'll find an umbrella when she gets home, and a nicer one than she ever had before.

MAJOR. Hum—I see. So Tiffany & Co. are the only winners by the operation.

MR. W. I'm sure Miss Harris hasn't lost anything by it.

MAJOR. (*Scrutinizingly.*) You say you had the umbrella sent to Miss Matilda Harris?

MR. W. (*Stammering.*) No—I—I didn't say that. As Miss Kitty's umbrella was lost, of course I sent this one to her.

MAJOR. (*Ironically.*) Of course.

[*Enter young girl—unnoticed. Takes a seat besides Mr. W. Gong sounds.*]

MR. W. Seems to me it was the least I could do.

(*Young woman starts at the sound of his voice—glances up and then drops her eyes, though she listens closely to the conversation.*)

MAJOR. And the most, probably, that your allowance would permit.

MR. W. (*With dignity.*) My salary, sir.

MAJOR. Well, call it salary if you like, but I haven't seen you in the office to-day. And see here, George, you are entirely too young to think of marrying.

MR. W. (*Starting up.*) Marrying— Who thinks of marrying?

MAJOR. You do, unless you have been willfully trifling with the affections of a young girl.

MR. W. (*Stiffly.*) May I ask to whom you refer?

MAJOR. (*Impatiently.*) Why, to Kitty Harris, of course. The whole town is talking about it, and I tell you (*excitedly*) it must be stopped (*bringing down his fist*). Stopped right here!

MR. W. But father—

MAJOR. Don't tell me! I know what I'm about. You shall never have my consent. I will not stand by and see you wreck your young life.

MR. W. Well, but—

MAJOR. I tell you I know the Harris's root and branch. They are all alike. All deceitful, hard hearted—faithless—Ugh! (*George essays to speak, but his father interrupts him with a gesture.*)

MAJOR. Don't speak a word—I know what you would say. But let me tell you that if you disregard my advice you need never come to me for any help. Not a cent shall you have from me. Not a cent. Now, I've spoken my mind plainly, and I hope you understand. I'm going out on the grip to have a smoke.

[*Exit MAJOR.*]

(*Mr. W. sits crestfallen, staring blankly before him. The young woman moves restlessly, as though trying to attract his attention.*)

YOUNG WOMAN. Ahem! Ahem! (*Taps her foot impatiently.*) Ahem!

MR. W. (*Turns toward her and his face fairly beams.*) Kitty!

KITTY. (*With cold surprise.*) Were you speaking to me, Mr. Winthrop?

MR. W. (*Brokenly.*) Why—why—what's the matter?

KITTY. (*Raising her eyebrows.*) Matter—Mr. Winthrop?

MR. W. (*Desperately.*) Oh! Is it that wretched umbrella again? (*Brightening.*) Didn't you get the umbrella?

KITTY. Umbrella? What umbrella, Mr. Winthrop?

MR. W. (*With a groan.*) For Heaven's sake don't "mister" me like that.

KITTY. (*Frigidly.*) I have neither the wish nor the right to call you anything else, Mr. Winthrop?

MR. W. (*With a deep groan.*) The right! What do you mean? (*Suddenly.*) When did you get into this car? Have you been listening to what—to—to—

KITTY. Listening is not the word. I heard all that was said about me and (*with a sob*) my family—and—and (*tearing off her glove*) here's your ring. All is over between us.

MR. W. (*Nervously wiping his face.*) And does all—all my love go for nothing?

KITTY. (*Tugging at the ring.*) Your love! Why, you never said a word except that—you—had—no—thought—of—marrying—me—(*sobs*).

MR. W. Kitty, dearest, you know I never said that.

KITTY. (*From the depths of her handkerchief.*) Well, if you didn't say it you meant it, and you let him say—all—those—horrid—things—and never said one—w-o-r-d.

MR. W. But Kitty, what could I say. I was so astonished—so nonplussed. You know I love you, darling. What difference does it make whether he consents or not, if we love each other—and—

KITTY. (*Forgetting herself.*) Who do you suppose told him? Some nasty jealous girl! (*Suddenly remembering and tugging at the ring.*) But she can have you now—whoever she is. It's all over, and—here's your ring. (*The ring slips from her hand and lodges in one of the folds of her gown. Both rise slowly to their feet looking for it.*)

KITTY. (*Shaking her drapery.*) Where is it? (*Sudden jerk of the car throws her against George, who puts his arm half round her.*)

MR. W. (*Murmuring.*) Kitty, darling!

KITTY. For Goodness sake, let go, George. There's a man.

[*Enter MR. SAMUEL HOBSON. All three sit down.*]

MR. W. (*Tenderly.*) And you do love me, Kitty? (*Enter CONDUCTOR.*)

CONDUCTOR. Fare, please. (*George pays. Gong sounds.*)

KITTY. (*Who has been carefully examining the umbrella carried by MR. HOBSON—whispering.*) George, I believe that man has my umbrella. It looks exactly like it.

MR. W. (*Springing to his feet.*) Your umbrella! (*Taking MR. HOBSON by the arm.*) Ah? Here you are—are you? I've been hunting for you all day. The police are on your track, sir; but I'll save them the trouble this time. What do you mean by taking other people's umbrellas?

MR. H. (*Shaking off his hand and immediately getting on the defensive.*) The police are on my track—air they? Well, I like your nerve, young feller. I'm a G. A. R., and it'll be a cold day when any of your police touch Samuel Hobson, Esquire.

[*Enter MISS MATILDA in time to hear the last words.*]

MISS H. (*In astonishment.*) Samuel Hobson! Why cousin Sam! How do you do?

MR. H. Bless my soul, Matilda—is that you? (*They shake hands violently, while swaying to and fro.*)

MISS H. And this is Kitty.

MR. H. (*Shaking hands with KITTY.*) Why, I ain't seen you since you was s-o high (*measuring with his hands*).

MISS H. When did you arrive?

MR. H. This mornin'—but I didn't know where you lived and I've been all day huntin' the owner of this yhere derved umbrell. Ef it's yourn, young feller, take it (*turning to GEORGE*), I don't grudge it to you none.

MISS H. Why, Kitty, this is your umbrella.

KITTY. Yes, indeed, aunt Matilda, and if it hadn't been for Geo—Mr. Winthrop, we never would have found cousin Sam. Mr. Winthrop went right up and spoke to him.

MR. W. (*Dryly.*) Yes—no doubt Mr. Hobson considers my manner of speaking a trifle abrupt. I beg your pardon, sir.

MR. H. So you were going to save the police the trouble, were you? Haw! Haw! Did you say your name was Winthrop?

MR. W. Yes—George Winthrop, Jr.

MR. H. What! Not Major George Winthrop's son? (*Enter MAJOR.*) Why, bless me, there he is now. (*Advancing with outstretched hands.*) Don't you remember Sam Hobson, Major?

MAJOR. (*Ecstatically—seizing his hand.*) Whst! Sam Hobson who saved my life at Gettysburg? I should think I did. What are you doing here, old fellow?

MR. H. Come out from Indiany to visit cousin Matilda's folks.

MAJOR. (*In great surprise.*) Cousin Matilda?

MR. H. Yes, Cousin Matilda Harris here.

MAJOR. She your cousin? I thought you—ah—er— In your delirium you raved about her eternally, and I—ah—

MR. H. And you thought I meant cousin Matilda because I had a letter in my pocket addressed to her? I remember wondering why you was so curious at the time? Why that is a good joke. I meant Matilda White that was—Mrs. Samuel Hobson that is. Them were the days I was kinder oncertain about getting her. Haw-hzaw!

MAJOR. (*Turning from one to the other.*) What's this? I can't seem to understand. And you two were never engaged?

MISS H. Engaged to cousin Sam Hobson? (*With a laugh.*) What an idea! Of course not.

MAJOR. Miss Harris—Matilda—can you understand and forgive me?

(*Gong sounds and both sit down. KITTY and GEORGE have withdrawn from the conversation some time before, and are sitting at the other end of the car. MR. HOBSON takes a seat between the two couples, who pay no attention whatever to him.*)

KITTY. (*To GEORGE.*) And you're sure I'm not faithless and hard hearted and deceitful—and—and—all those horrid things?

MR. W. (*Tenderly.*) Certain and——

KITTY. Oh! George, here's the ring. It has been right here in this fold all the time.

MR. W. Sensible ring. It couldn't stray far from that dear little hand. Ah! Kitty——

[*Gong sounds twice.*]

MAJOR. (*Glancing toward the young couple.*) How happy they are! Why shouldn't it be? I'm sure I would be perfectly satisfied.

MISS H. (*With a sigh.*) Yes, let them be happy while they are young. Nothing could be better.

MAJOR. (*Bending over her.*) Nothing, Matilda? Is it only the young who are to be happy? Can the suffering caused by youthful errors never be rectified? Ah! Matilda——

[*Gong sounds twice.*]

MR. H. (*Who has been arranging his bag and umbrella.*) Haw! haw—so I'm a thief, am I. That's a good joke! The police are on my track, air they? Haw—haw—ha—(*stops in the middle of a laugh, observing that no one is listening to him.*)

MISS H. But how could you think I cared for him!

MAJOR. I was mad with jealousy. Love is always blind.

MISS H. But you will never doubt me again, George? You will never care for anyone else?

MAJOR. Never, Matilda. Our lives will be one long thought of and for each other—we——

[*Gong sounds twice.*]

KITTY. And you are sure you will never care for anyone else, George?

MR. W. Never, Kitty. Our lives will be one long thought of and for——

[*Gong sounds twice.*]

MR. H. (*Who has been looking from one to the other.*) Well! I guess I ain't wanted here.

MISS H. (*Turning to him with a beaming face.*) Not wanted here, cousin Sam? Of course you are. Why, if it hadn't been for you——

MR. H. An' the umbrell——

KITTY. And George——

MAJOR. Yes, don't forget George's noble generosity.

MISS H. All this never would have happened.

MR. W. But you are all forgetting the chief agent in bringing about this meeting. And if it were not for the publicity of the thing, I would say three cheers for the cable car!

GONG CONTINUES TO RING WHILE THE CURTAIN FALLS.





PROSCENIUM AND DROP SCENE.

PROSCENIUM.—A most effective Proscenium can be formed by utilizing the paper made for this purpose. Three pieces of wood are merely required, shaped according to this design, and covered with the paper; the proscenium having the appearance of light blue puffed satin panels, in gold frames, with Shakespearian medallion in the centre.

Puffed satin paper, Light Blue, size 20 inches by 20 inches, per sheet, 25 cts.

Imitation Gold Bordering, per sheet, 25c., making 14 feet.

Shakespearian Medallion, 18 inches in diameter, 50 cts.

DROP SCENE.—The picture shown above is an illustration of this scene. It comprises four sheets of paper which are to be pasted in the centre of any sized canvas that may be requisite for the drop curtain. Size $6\frac{1}{2}$ feet by 5 feet. Price \$2.50.

DOORS.—These comprise three sheets of paper each, and can be had either for drawing-room or cottage purposes. Size, 7 feet by 3 feet. Price, complete, \$1.25 each.

WINDOW.—This is a parlor window formed with two sheets of paper, and could be made practicable to slide up and down. The introduction of curtains each side would make it very effective. Size, 3 feet by $4\frac{1}{2}$ feet. Price, \$1.00, complete.

FRENCH WINDOW.—Consisting of four sheets of paper, representing a window containing four large ornamental frosted glass panes with colored glass around. Size $6\frac{1}{2}$ feet high by 5 feet. Price \$1.50.

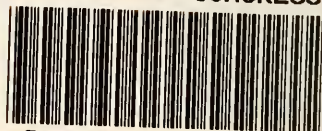
FIREPLACE.—This is also made with two sheets of paper. The fire is lighted, but should this not be required a fire-paper can be hung over it. It will be found most useful in many farces wherein a character has to climb up a chimney, and many plays where a fireplace is indispensable. By purchasing a door, window, and fireplace an ordinary room scene could easily be constructed with the addition of some wall-paper. Size, 3 feet by $4\frac{1}{2}$ feet. Price, complete, \$1.25.

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